Application No. Not Yet Assigned Paper Dated December 1, 2005 In Reply to USPTO Correspondence of N/A Attorney Docket No. 4559-053584

## AMENDMENTS TO THE ABSTRACT

After the claims, please insert a page containing the <u>Abstract</u>, which is currently amended as follows, and which is attached hereto as a separately typed replacement page.

-- The present invention concerns a method for improving plant growth characteristics, comprising increasing, in a monocotyledonous plant, expression of a nucleic acid encoding an NFIXNHX protein and/or increasing activity of an NFIXNHX protein, wherein said plant is grown under non-salt stress conditions. --